



THERESA HEINRICHS

A life in texture and colour

WRITTEN BY
LORENZ C PLOURDE

An Artist's Journey Through Colour, Texture, and Inspiration

Written by Lorenz Plourde

Process Art Discovery

This written portrait of artist Theresa Heinrichs is based on a series of filmed conversations conducted in her studio in Okanagan Landing, British Columbia.

Over the course of these conversations, Theresa reflects on the experiences that shaped her life in art — from her earliest childhood fascination with paintings and sculpture, through her formal training and thirty-five-year career as an art educator, to the development of her distinctive textured painting style.

She also speaks about the artists who influenced her, including Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh, the inspiration she found through travel, and the deeply personal experiences that revealed to her the emotional power of art.

The following pages present her story as it was shared during those conversations, preserving her voice, insights, and reflections on a lifetime devoted to creativity.

This work was written and compiled by Lorenz Plourde, creator of *Process Art Discovery*, a project dedicated to documenting the stories, techniques, and creative journeys of visual artists.

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Written by Lorenz Plourde
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Acknowledgements

This written portrait of Theresa Heinrichs would not have been possible without Theresa's generosity in sharing her time, memories, and reflections on a lifetime devoted to art.

During our filmed conversations in her studio in Okanagan Landing, Theresa spoke openly about the experiences that shaped her journey — from the early encouragement of a teacher in Nova Scotia, through decades of teaching art, to the inspiration she found through travel, colour, and the work of artists such as Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh.

Her willingness to reflect on both the joys and challenges of a life in art made it possible to preserve these stories for others who may find inspiration in them.

Special appreciation also goes to the many students, fellow artists, and collectors whose lives have intersected with Theresa's work over the years. Through teaching, exhibitions, and personal connections, her art has touched many people and continues to encourage creativity in others.

It has been a privilege to document and share this story.

— Lorenz Plourde



About the Author

Lorenz Plourde is a videographer, writer, and creator of the *Process Art Discovery* project.



Based in Kelowna, British Columbia, his work focuses on documenting the stories, techniques, and creative journeys of visual artists. Through filmed interviews, studio visits, and written profiles, he explores the personal experiences and artistic philosophies that shape the work of painters, sculptors, and other creators.

His approach emphasizes the human side of art — the curiosity, perseverance, and inspiration that guide artists throughout their lives.

The interviews and stories collected through *Process Art Discovery* aim to preserve the voices of working artists and share their experiences with a wider audience.

Foreword

I first met Theresa Heinrichs through the local art community in the Okanagan. Like many artists who have spent decades devoted to their craft, Theresa carries a quiet depth of experience that only becomes fully visible when she begins to talk about art.

When I visited her studio in Okanagan Landing, what struck me immediately was the sense that her paintings were not simply images on canvas. They were built with layers, texture, and movement — almost sculptural in nature. It became clear very quickly that her work was the result of a lifetime spent observing, teaching, experimenting, and reflecting on what art means.



As part of my *Process Art Discovery* project, I have had the opportunity to film conversations with many artists.

The purpose of these conversations is simple: to preserve the stories behind the work. Art itself often survives long after it is created, but the experiences, influences, and personal reflections of the artist can easily be lost if they are not recorded.

During our time together, Theresa spoke about her childhood fascination with paintings and sculpture, the teacher who recognized her talent early on, the decades she spent teaching art to students, and the way travel and the work of artists like Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh shaped her understanding of colour and expression.

She also shared the origin of the distinctive textured style that has become a signature of her work — a technique inspired by her early love of sculpture and her discovery that molding paste and palette knives could transform a flat canvas into something almost dimensional.

The conversations that follow are drawn from those filmed interviews. They are presented in a narrative form so that readers can experience Theresa's story in her own voice — a story of curiosity, persistence, creativity, and the enduring joy of making art.

One of the thoughts Theresa has shared with her students throughout her life captures the spirit of this book perfectly:

We are all artists. Everyone has that spark of creativity inside them.

It is my hope that the story that follows encourages readers to see art not only as something created by artists, but as something that belongs to all of us.

— Lorenz Plourde
Process Art Discovery

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How to Read This Book

This book is based on a series of filmed conversations with artist Theresa Heinrichs, recorded in her studio in Okanagan Landing, British Columbia.

During these conversations, Theresa spoke about the many experiences that shaped her life in art — her early fascination with painting and sculpture, the teachers who encouraged her, the decades she spent teaching art, the influence of travel, and the development of her distinctive textured painting style.

The chapters that follow are drawn directly from those discussions. Rather than presenting the material as a formal interview, the story has been organized into a narrative form so that it reads naturally and reflects Theresa’s voice and reflections as closely as possible.

Where appropriate, the story has been structured around key themes in her artistic life, including:

- Early artistic influences
- Formal training and education
- Travel and artistic inspiration
- Studio process and technique
- The influence of art on her life
- The continuing evolution of her work

The goal of this book is not only to document Theresa Heinrichs’ artistic journey, but also to preserve the personal insights and experiences behind the work — the kind of knowledge that artists often share in conversation but that is rarely recorded in written form.

Through these pages, readers are invited to step inside the studio and experience the story behind the paintings.



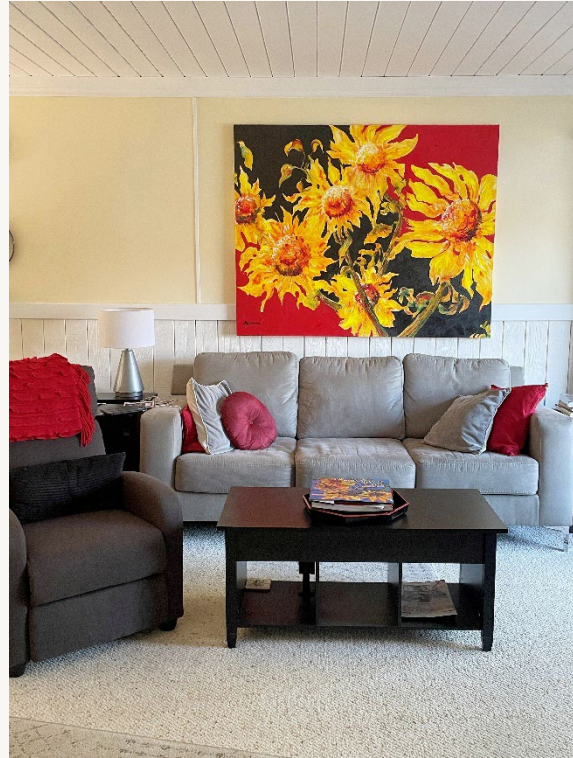
Part One – A Studio Filled with Colour and Texture

The first thing you notice when entering Theresa Heinrichs' studio is scale.

Large canvases dominate the room. Their surfaces catch the light at different angles, revealing ridges, valleys, and layers of paint that give the paintings a sculptural presence. These are not flat images that quietly hang on a wall. They are bold, textured landscapes of colour and movement that seem almost alive under shifting light.

Theresa stands comfortably among them, as if this vibrant environment is the most natural place in the world for her to be. In many ways, it is. After decades of painting, teaching, travelling, and exploring the possibilities of art, the studio has become both her workplace and her sanctuary.

From this room in Okanagan Landing, she continues a lifelong conversation with colour, texture, and the landscapes that have inspired her work.



“I’ve always loved art,” she says with an easy warmth that suggests the statement is both simple and deeply true.

For Theresa, art did not begin as a career plan. It began as curiosity — a quiet fascination with images and ideas that first appeared when she was very young.

She remembers lying on the floor with her parents, looking through the *Books of Knowledge*, an encyclopedia series that contained reproductions of famous artworks and sculptures from around the world. While other children might have flipped quickly through the pages, Theresa lingered.

“I would spend hours looking at those pictures,” she recalls. “There were sculptures from around the world and paintings from around the world, and I just loved looking at them.”

At the time, she didn’t know that these moments were planting the earliest seeds of a life in art. She only knew that the images captivated her — that there was something about them that felt endlessly interesting.

In retrospect, those hours of quiet observation may have been the beginning of something deeper: the development of an artist’s eye.

An artist does not simply look at the world. An artist studies it. Colour, form, and texture begin to reveal themselves as a language.

For Theresa, that language continued to grow as she moved through school. But it was in Grade Seven that her path took a decisive turn.

A teacher in Nova Scotia recognized something special in her work. Encouraging her enthusiasm, the teacher began giving Theresa extra instruction after school, helping her explore painting more seriously.

Then, without telling her, the teacher entered several of her paintings in a local art festival.

When the paintings came back with ribbons attached, Theresa experienced a moment of clarity.

“That’s when I thought,” she says with a smile, “this is what I want to do for the rest of my life.”

It is a story that she still tells with gratitude, because it represents one of the most important forces in an artist’s life: recognition.

Many artists can remember a single teacher, mentor, or moment of encouragement that helped them realize their potential. For Theresa, that Grade Seven teacher was the first person to take her artistic curiosity seriously.

The experience did more than validate her interest. It gave her direction.

Art was no longer simply something she enjoyed. It was something she could pursue.

Over the years that followed, that pursuit would take Theresa through formal training, a long and fulfilling career as an art educator, and decades of personal artistic exploration. Along the way, she would develop a distinctive style known for its rich textures and luminous colours.

But even now, standing in a studio surrounded by large paintings, she still speaks about art with the same sense of wonder that first appeared when she was a child looking through those books.

Curiosity, it seems, never left her.

And perhaps that is the true beginning of every artist’s story.



Part Two – The Teacher Who Changed Everything

Artists often remember the moment when their interest in art quietly turns into something more serious. For Theresa Heinrichs, that moment arrived in Grade Seven.

Until then, art had been something she loved doing. Drawing and painting came naturally, and she spent many hours absorbed in images and colour. But like many young students, she did not yet see art as something that could shape the course of her life.

That changed because one teacher noticed her work.

The class was in Nova Scotia, where Theresa was growing up at the time. Her art teacher saw promise in her paintings and began offering extra guidance after school, helping her develop her skills and confidence.

Without telling her, the teacher also submitted several of her paintings to a local art festival.

When the results came back, Theresa discovered that her work had won ribbons.

It was a small moment in the larger arc of her life, but it had a powerful impact. For the first time, someone outside her family had recognized the value of what she was creating.

“That’s when I realized,” she recalls, “this is what I want to do for the rest of my life.”

Encouragement can be a fragile but powerful force in the life of a young artist. Without it, many people quietly set their creative interests aside. With it, a new path opens.

For Theresa, that teacher’s belief helped turn curiosity into commitment.

The experience stayed with her for decades, and it would eventually influence another important chapter of her life: teaching.

Theresa would go on to spend thirty-five years as an art educator, sharing the joy of creativity with students of all ages. Throughout those years, she carried the memory of that early encouragement with her.

She understood firsthand how meaningful it can be when a teacher takes a student’s creativity seriously.

Over time, she began to see teaching not only as a profession but also as a way of passing forward the same inspiration she had received.

“I hope that I inspired a few students along the way,” she says with quiet humility.

Given the length of her teaching career and the enthusiasm with which she speaks about it, it is likely that the number was far greater than a few.

But Theresa’s own artistic journey was continuing to evolve as well.

As she moved into university studies, she encountered a new influence that would shape her artistic voice in a lasting way: sculpture.

The experience opened a new dimension of thinking about form and space. Instead of seeing art only as colour on a flat surface, she began to understand how shape, structure, and depth could give an artwork physical presence.

In sculpture studios she experimented with large forms and expressive shapes, enjoying the freedom that three-dimensional work allowed.

There was only one practical challenge.

Large sculptures, she soon discovered, are not easy to transport.

The pieces she created were often ambitious in scale, and moving them between studios, classrooms, or exhibitions could become complicated.

But the influence of sculpture never left her.

Instead, Theresa began to think creatively about how the same ideas of depth and dimension might be translated onto a canvas.

That question would eventually lead her toward a distinctive painting technique that would become one of the defining features of her work.

By combining sculptural thinking with painting materials, she found a way to bring texture, movement, and physical depth directly into her paintings.

What began as a practical solution soon became a personal style.

And in the studio today, surrounded by canvases that seem almost carved out of colour and light, the connection between sculpture and painting remains clearly visible.

The seeds of Theresa Heinrichs' artistic voice had been planted.

The next step would be learning how to see the world like an artist.



Part Three – Learning to See Like an Artist

Art school teaches many things: technique, discipline, and the history of those who came before. But perhaps the most important lesson is something less tangible — learning how to truly see.

For Theresa Heinrichs, university was where her artistic instincts began to mature into a clearer personal direction. Surrounded by studios, instructors, and fellow students who were equally passionate about art, she found herself immersed in an environment where experimentation was encouraged and curiosity was rewarded.

One of the strongest influences during this time was sculpture.

Theresa spent countless hours in the sculpture studio, working with materials that allowed her to think in three dimensions. Sculptural forms appealed to her sense of movement and structure. The process of shaping material — carving, building, and refining — gave her a new appreciation for how art could occupy physical space.

Large sculptures began appearing around the studio, each one a product of long hours of experimentation.

“I had pieces of sculpture everywhere,” she remembers.

But while sculpture was exciting creatively, it also presented practical challenges. Large pieces are not easily moved, transported, or displayed outside the studio. As Theresa continued developing her artistic practice, she began searching for ways to combine the expressive power of sculpture with the flexibility of painting.

The answer arrived in the form of texture.

Using molding paste and a palette knife, she began experimenting with building raised surfaces directly on the canvas. Instead of applying paint to a flat surface, she sculpted the paint itself — shaping ridges, contours, and patterns that created depth and shadow across the canvas.

Sometimes she mixed colour directly into the molding paste. Other times she applied paint over the textured surface after it dried, allowing the raised forms to catch the light and give the painting a dynamic quality.

The result was something unique.

Her paintings were no longer simply images. They became objects with presence — surfaces that invited the viewer to notice the way light interacts with texture.

In this way, Theresa had found a way to bring the lessons of sculpture into the world of painting.

What had begun as a practical solution to the problem of transporting large sculptures gradually evolved into a signature style.

Today, texture remains one of the defining characteristics of her work.

Standing in her studio, it becomes clear that these paintings are meant to be experienced as much as viewed. Light moves across the textured surfaces differently throughout the day, revealing new details each time the viewer returns.

But Theresa's development as an artist was not shaped only by studio work.

Travel also played an important role in expanding the way she saw the world.

Artists often speak of travel as a form of education. New landscapes, cultures, and light conditions can dramatically shift an artist's perception of colour and space. For Theresa, journeys to places such as Australia, Italy, France, Alaska, and India became opportunities to absorb new visual experiences.

These travels did not simply provide reference material for paintings.

They changed the way she saw colour itself.

Where others might see a mountain, Theresa noticed the subtle variations within its shadows — hints of blue, mauve, or green. Reflections in water revealed unexpected golds and violets. Even the simplest landscape held a complex conversation of colour waiting to be discovered.

This sensitivity to colour would become central to her work.

Her paintings often move beyond literal representation, allowing colour relationships to guide the viewer's experience of the scene. Mountains, forests, and water may appear recognizable, but they are infused with a painter's interpretation of the world rather than a strict photographic reality.

In many ways, Theresa had begun to develop the most essential skill of any artist.

She had learned to see differently.

And as her artistic vision expanded, another important chapter of her life was beginning to unfold — one that would allow her to share that vision with others for many years to come.



Part Four – Thirty-Five Years of Teaching Art

For many artists, creating art is a solitary pursuit. Hours in the studio pass quietly as colour and form slowly take shape. But for Theresa Heinrichs, art was never only about the work she created herself. For thirty-five years, it was also about the work she helped others discover within themselves.

Teaching became a central part of her life.

Over the decades, she guided students through their first tentative sketches, their early experiments with colour, and the often surprising moment when they realized that creativity was something they possessed all along.

Theresa remembers those years with affection.

“I had the most fun anybody could ever have,” she says, describing the experience of painting and teaching art at the same time.

Her classroom was not simply a place where students learned techniques. It was a place where they learned to observe the world differently — to notice colour in unexpected places, to see texture and shape where others might only see ordinary objects.



This ability to see differently is something Theresa believes lies at the heart of creativity.

For her, art has never been reserved only for professional artists or gallery walls. It is something far more universal.

“We are all artists,” she often tells people.

It is a philosophy she repeated countless times throughout her teaching career, and one that continues to shape the way she speaks about art today.

Creativity, in Theresa’s view, is not a rare gift possessed by a few. It is a natural human impulse — something that appears whenever someone sketches during a walk, mixes colours for the first time, or simply begins paying closer attention to the world around them.

She has seen this realization unfold in many different ways.

One story she remembers clearly happened while she was teaching a painting class on a cruise ship. The class was working on a simple sunflower painting when she noticed an elderly gentleman

quietly absorbed in his work. He was around eighty years old, and the painting he produced was gentle and beautiful.

When Theresa spoke with him afterward, she noticed something unexpected.

Tears were running down his face.

Concerned, she asked what was wrong.

The man explained that he wasn't upset about the painting. In fact, he loved it. What moved him to tears was the realization that he had spent most of his life believing he couldn't paint — and only now, at eighty years old, had discovered how much joy it brought him.

"I'm just sad about all the years I could have been doing this," he told her.

Moments like that stayed with Theresa.

They reinforced her belief that creativity belongs to everyone, and that discovering it — even later in life — can bring unexpected happiness.



Teaching allowed her to witness those discoveries again and again.

It also influenced her own approach to painting.

Working with students often encourages artists to re-examine their own ideas, to explain processes that might otherwise remain intuitive. In doing so, Theresa continued refining her understanding of colour, composition, and texture.

Her studio practice and her teaching career grew side by side, each one informing the other.

And through those decades of sharing art with others, Theresa came to understand something essential about creativity.

Art is not simply about producing paintings.

It is about the joy of expression.

That joy — the simple pleasure of making something with colour, shape, and imagination — became the message she hoped every student would carry with them long after leaving her classroom.

As the years passed, Theresa's own artistic journey continued to evolve. New experiences, new landscapes, and new inspirations would gradually shape the direction of her work.

Some of the most profound of those influences would come from artists she had admired since childhood.

And eventually, she would travel across the world to see their work for herself.



Part Five – Travels That Shaped Her Vision

Artists often carry their influences with them long before they encounter them in person.

For Theresa Heinrichs, the work of the Impressionist painters had always held a special place in her imagination. Even as a young artist studying painting and sculpture, she found herself drawn to artists who explored colour, atmosphere, and texture in ways that felt alive.

Two names stood above the rest.

Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh.

Their paintings spoke to her in a deeply personal way. The softness of Monet's vision, the movement and emotional intensity of van Gogh's brushwork, and the textured surfaces both artists created resonated strongly with Theresa's own instincts as a painter.

"I'm not really a sharp-edged type of person," she explains with a smile. "I tend to see things more softly."

Impressionism suited that way of seeing.

Where some artists focused on precise outlines and controlled compositions, the Impressionists allowed colour and light to carry the image. Shapes dissolved gently into atmosphere, and brushstrokes remained visible as part of the painting's surface.

For Theresa, this approach felt natural.

But admiration from afar is one thing. Seeing the work of great artists in person is something entirely different.

Travel gave Theresa the opportunity to experience that difference firsthand.

One of the most memorable journeys of her life brought her to Giverny, the small village in northern France where Claude Monet created some of his most famous paintings. Walking through Monet's home and gardens, she could see the environment that had inspired those luminous water lily paintings that had fascinated her for so many years.

The famous garden pond, the arching Japanese bridge, the carefully arranged flowers — all of it formed a living landscape that Monet had observed again and again in changing light.

For an artist, it was an extraordinary experience.

Theresa remembers the excitement of standing in Monet's studio, surrounded by the massive canvases that captured those scenes in layers of colour and texture. The paintings were far larger than they appeared in reproductions, and the surfaces revealed countless brushstrokes working together to create the final image.

What seemed effortless from a distance became a complex orchestration of colour when viewed up close.

At one museum in New York, Theresa even found herself standing only inches away from one of Monet's paintings.



“I could see every brushstroke,” she recalls. “Nobody stopped me.”

For a painter fascinated by texture, it was an unforgettable moment.

The experience deepened her appreciation for how artists build images — not simply through subject matter, but through the physical act of painting itself.

Another powerful journey took her to the small French village of Auvers-sur-Oise, where Vincent van Gogh spent the final weeks of his life.

The town has preserved many of the locations that appear in van Gogh’s paintings. In some places, the town has even placed reproductions of the paintings beside the landscapes that inspired them, allowing visitors to compare the real scene with van Gogh’s interpretation.

A church with distinctive gables stands where van Gogh once painted it. Nearby fields recall the swirling wheat landscapes that became some of his most powerful works.

For Theresa, walking through Auvers-sur-Oise felt almost like stepping inside a painting.

“You could see exactly how the place had inspired him,” she says.

The connection between landscape and imagination became vividly clear. Van Gogh had not merely recorded what he saw; he had transformed it, intensifying colour and movement to express what he felt.

That realization resonated deeply with Theresa's own approach to painting.

Art, she believed, was never simply about copying reality.

It was about responding to it.

These travels strengthened the direction her own work was already taking. Texture, colour, and atmosphere remained central to her paintings, but they were now supported by a deeper understanding of how artists throughout history had approached the same questions.

Standing in her studio today, surrounded by textured canvases filled with vibrant colour, the influence of those journeys can still be felt.

The echoes of Monet's layered surfaces and van Gogh's expressive brushwork quietly live within the language of her own paintings.

And yet, as important as artistic influence can be, some of the most meaningful moments in an artist's life arise not from history or travel — but from the unexpected connections that occur between a painting and the person who encounters it.

For Theresa, one of those moments would arrive during a difficult period in her life.

And it would reveal something profound about the emotional power of art.



Part Six – When a Painting Finds Its Meaning

Artists often begin a painting with an idea, a memory, or a feeling they wish to explore. But sometimes a painting carries meaning beyond what the artist first intended. It becomes something larger — a quiet bridge between two lives.

For Theresa Heinrichs, one such moment occurred during a particularly difficult time in her life.

Her husband was facing a serious illness, and the uncertainty of the situation weighed heavily on her. Like many artists, Theresa turned to painting as a way to process what she was feeling.

“I had to paint my way out of this,” she remembers thinking.

The painting that emerged from that moment was large and luminous. Birch trees rose through the composition, surrounded by flowing water and soft leaves. The scene was peaceful, almost dreamlike — a place of calm that seemed far removed from the anxiety she was experiencing.

In creating the painting, Theresa was doing what artists have done for centuries: transforming emotion into colour and form.

The process helped her find a sense of balance again.

When the painting was finished, she brought it to Art Walk, where it was displayed among the work of other artists. Visitors moved through the exhibition space, pausing here and there to admire different pieces.

One woman stopped in front of the birch painting and studied it carefully.

She asked Theresa if the painting was for sale.

Theresa told her that it was.

The woman then asked if she could pick it up later at Theresa’s studio, and arrangements were made.

Some time afterward, the woman arrived to collect the painting. As they spoke, she asked Theresa a simple question.

“Do you know why I bought this painting?”

Theresa admitted that she didn’t.

The woman explained that she was a breast cancer survivor.

To her, the painting represented hope.

In that moment, Theresa realized something extraordinary.

The emotions she had poured into the painting — her desire to move from fear toward beauty and peace — had been recognized by someone else who needed the same feeling in her own life.

The connection had happened without words.

“It just shows you,” Theresa reflects, “that your emotions, your feelings, your life can appear on the canvas, and sometimes you don’t even realize it.”

The woman carefully secured the large painting to the roof of her car and drove it all the way back to the United States.

The image of that painting travelling down the highway — carrying its quiet message of hope — remains one of Theresa’s most meaningful memories as an artist.

Moments like that reveal something important about the nature of art.

A painting is not only an object. It is also a conversation between the artist and the viewer. Sometimes that conversation happens across distances of geography, experience, and time.

And sometimes it speaks directly to the heart of someone who needs it most.

For Theresa, the experience reinforced a belief she had carried throughout her life: art has the power to move people in ways that cannot always be explained.

It can comfort.

It can inspire.

And occasionally, it can bring two strangers together through a shared emotional understanding.

But Theresa’s reflections on art do not stop there.

After decades of painting, teaching, and travelling, she has come to believe that creativity itself is one of the most joyful pursuits a person can discover.

And in her view, it is something that belongs to everyone.



Part Seven – The Artist’s Way of Seeing

One of the most interesting things about artists is that they do not see the world the way most people do.

Where others might see a simple landscape, an artist notices the subtle relationships between colour, light, and texture. The ordinary world becomes layered with possibilities.

For Theresa Heinrichs, this way of seeing developed gradually over a lifetime of painting and observation.

Colour, in particular, has always fascinated her.

Standing in front of one of her landscapes, a viewer might first recognize the familiar elements — mountains, water, forests, skies. But the longer one looks, the more the painting reveals. Blues blend gently into mauves, greens shift toward gold, and shadows contain unexpected hints of violet or rose.

These subtle colour transitions are not accidental. They reflect the way Theresa experiences the landscape itself.

“When you really look,” she often explains, “you start noticing colour everywhere.”

A mountain is never just grey or green. Reflections in water carry traces of the sky. Sunlight transforms leaves and grasses into a spectrum of shifting tones.

Artists who embrace colour in this way often feel a strong connection to the Impressionist tradition, and Theresa is no exception. The work of Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh helped reinforce her belief that colour can carry emotion just as powerfully as subject matter.

Monet’s ability to capture atmosphere through layered brushstrokes fascinated her, while van Gogh’s expressive use of paint revealed how texture could amplify emotional intensity.

Both artists left their brushwork visible, allowing the viewer to see the act of painting itself.

This idea resonated deeply with Theresa’s own approach.

In her work, the surface of the painting remains active and expressive. Texture is not hidden; it becomes part of the experience of viewing the piece.

Using molding paste and palette knives, she builds ridges and patterns that create shadows and highlights across the canvas. When paint is added, colour flows across these surfaces in ways that shift depending on the angle of light.

The result is a painting that changes subtly throughout the day.

Morning light may emphasize one set of textures, while evening light reveals another. From a distance, the painting reads as a cohesive image. Up close, the viewer begins to notice the sculptural landscape of the paint itself.

This layered experience — image from afar, texture up close — reflects Theresa’s ongoing dialogue between painting and sculpture.

It also invites viewers to slow down.

Modern life often encourages people to move quickly from one image to another. But textured paintings reward patience. They reveal their complexity gradually, encouraging the viewer to spend time observing the work.

For Theresa, that process of looking closely is part of the joy of art.

Her studio practice reflects the same philosophy.

When she paints, she does not rush toward a finished result. Instead, she allows the painting to evolve. One layer suggests another. One colour leads naturally into the next.

In many ways, the painting itself becomes a conversation.

The artist responds to what is happening on the canvas, adjusting colour, texture, and composition as the work develops.

This openness to discovery has allowed Theresa's work to remain fresh and evolving even after decades of painting.

Art, in her view, is not something that becomes fixed once a style is discovered. It continues to grow alongside the artist.

And that belief leads naturally to one of the ideas she shares most often with others.

Creativity, she says, is not something reserved for professionals.

It is something everyone can experience.



Part Eight – Art Is Always Evolving

After a lifetime spent painting, teaching, travelling, and observing the world through an artist's eyes, Theresa Heinrichs still speaks about creativity with a sense of enthusiasm that feels fresh and genuine.

For her, art has never been a destination.

It is a journey.

One painting leads to another. One colour suggests the next. An idea begins on the canvas and quietly evolves into something unexpected.

“I will never live long enough to paint everything I want to paint,” she says with a gentle laugh.

The statement is not one of frustration, but of excitement. For Theresa, the endless possibilities of art are part of its beauty.

Inspiration arrives from many places.

Sometimes it begins with photographs or sketches she has taken during her travels. Sometimes it comes from simply stepping outside and observing the world around her. A walk through a gallery, a conversation with fellow artists, or the colours of a landscape can all spark new ideas.

Even now, she continues to attend weekly painting sessions with other artists, sharing ideas and observing how others approach their work.

Watching another artist mix colour or experiment with texture can be enough to inspire an entirely new direction.

This openness to learning is one of the reasons her work continues to evolve.

Theresa does not see creativity as something that becomes fixed over time. Instead, she believes the artistic process remains fluid throughout a person's life.

One of the most meaningful lessons Theresa learned about creativity came through her many years of teaching.

Again and again, she witnessed people discover abilities they never realized they possessed. Some were complete beginners. Others had quietly believed for years that they simply were not artistic.

It reinforced something she had believed for a long time: creativity is not limited by age, training, or profession. The ability to create exists within everyone.

“We are all artists,” she says.

It is a statement she has repeated to students countless times over the years.

Some people express creativity through painting or sculpture. Others find it through music, writing, cooking, or building things with their hands. What matters is not the form it takes, but the act of engaging with the world in a creative way.

Even small acts of creativity can bring joy.

Sketching during a walk. Taking a small painting set on a trip. Mixing colours simply to see what happens.

These moments reconnect people with something fundamental within themselves — the ability to imagine and create.

For Theresa, that discovery has been the greatest gift of her life in art.

The studio where she works today remains filled with large textured paintings that reflect decades of exploration and inspiration. Each canvas carries the marks of her distinctive technique and her lifelong fascination with colour and texture.

But perhaps more important than any single painting is the spirit that continues to guide her work.

Curiosity.

Wonder.

And the belief that art — in all its forms — can bring beauty, meaning, and connection into the world.

The journey, for Theresa Heinrichs, is still unfolding.



Epilogue – The Artist and the Story

When I first visited Theresa Heinrichs' studio, I expected to meet an accomplished painter. What I did not expect was how clearly her life in art would reveal itself through conversation.

The large paintings that filled the room immediately caught my attention. Their textured surfaces and luminous colours gave the studio a sense of movement and presence. But as Theresa began speaking about her journey, it became clear that the story behind those paintings was just as compelling as the work itself.

Like many artists, Theresa's path began quietly — a child studying images in an encyclopedia, fascinated by paintings and sculptures from around the world. Encouraged by a perceptive teacher and guided by decades of curiosity, that early fascination gradually became a lifelong pursuit.

Over the years her journey would take her through formal art education, thirty-five years of teaching, and travels that deepened her connection to artists such as Monet and van Gogh. Along the way she developed her own distinctive voice as a painter, blending sculptural texture with vibrant colour to create paintings that feel both expressive and alive.

Yet what stands out most about Theresa is not simply the work itself, but the spirit with which she approaches art.

She speaks about creativity with generosity and enthusiasm. For her, art is not a privilege reserved for professionals or gallery walls. It is a human impulse — something that lives quietly inside everyone.

That belief shaped her decades in the classroom, where she encouraged students to explore their creativity without fear. It appears in the stories she tells about people discovering art later in life. And it lives in the paintings themselves, which invite viewers to slow down and see colour, light, and texture in new ways.

In many ways, Theresa represents a kind of artist who is becoming increasingly rare.

She belongs to a generation that values patience, observation, and the simple joy of making things by hand. Her work reflects a lifetime spent paying attention — to landscapes, to colour, and to the subtle emotional connections that paintings can create between people.

During our conversations she spoke often about inspiration, about how one painting leads naturally to another. It is a process that never truly ends.

Perhaps that is the most fitting way to think about her story.

Art, for Theresa Heinrichs, has never been a finished achievement. It is a continuing journey — one shaped by curiosity, guided by colour, and sustained by the quiet belief that creativity belongs to everyone.

And standing in her studio, surrounded by textured canvases filled with light, it is easy to see that the journey is far from over.



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